

MEDIA ADVISORY; Clinton and Nadler to Begin Companion Hearings Into Federal Government Failures on Environmental Impacts of 9/11 World Trade Center Attacks

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House Hearing will take place on June 25, 2007 in Washington, DC

Washington, DC - Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, Chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Superfund and Environmental Health, and Congressman Jerrold Nadler (NY-08), Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, will begin the first of two hearings tomorrow into the failures of the Federal government in responding to the environmental crisis that resulted from the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center attacks.

For more than five years, Clinton and Nadler have staunchly criticized and questioned the Administration's misleading public statements about post-9/11 air quality, as well as its continued failure to provide a proper testing and cleaning of indoor spaces contaminated by WTC toxins and its lack of provision of health care for the thousands of people who are already ill as a result of exposure to the pollutants.

The Senate Hearing will take place tomorrow, June 20, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. (See - <http://clinton.senate.gov/news/statements/details.cfm?id=277087&&>) The hearing will focus specifically on the Federal government's failure to date, to systematically and properly test and remediate all indoor residences, workplaces and public areas of buildings affected by the hazardous materials from the WTC disaster. In 2003, the EPA Inspector General found that the EPA's first post-9/11 "indoor residential cleanup plan" was improperly limited in scope, deeply flawed in methodology, and failed to utilize EPA's own standard health-based benchmarks. The EPA's most recent "Test and Clean" plan, currently underway, fails to correct the problems diagnosed by the Inspector General, and ignores her specific recommendations for development of a proper plan. This second plan was rejected by most members of the EPA's own World Trade Center Technical Review Panel, a body created at the request of Senator Clinton. The hearing will also examine EPA's current readiness to respond to Bush Administration disaster policy.

Witnesses are as follows:

- James L. Connaughton - Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
- Susan Parker Bodine - Assistant Administrator for Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Capt. Sven E. Rodenbeck - Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
- John B. Stephenson - Director, Natural Resources & Environment, Government Accountability Office
- David M. Newman - New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (OHSA)
- Nina Lavin - New York City Resident

The House Hearing will take place on June 25, 2007 at 1:00pm in the Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2141, and will focus on "substantive due process" concerns arising from the federal government's actions on environmental matters post 9/11.

(See

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/ny08_nadler/

[EPAWhitmanJune25Hear061107.html](#))

Specifically, it will examine what the EPA Inspector General described as early, misleading federal government assurances of safety regarding the environment post 9/11, as well her conclusion that the White House itself interfered to soften cautionary language and add falsely reassuring statements about the air quality. Additionally, it will examine whether the Federal government's "risk communications" conferred the necessary and legal precautions required for the handling of hazardous materials by citizens returning to their homes after the attacks, and the use of Personnel Protective Equipment by rescue and recovery workers on the "pile."

Witnesses are as follows:

- Christine Todd Whitman - Former Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- John Henshaw - Former Administrator, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
- Samuel Thernstrom - Former Member, White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
- Eileen McGinnis - Former Chief of Staff to EPA Administrator Whitman
- Tina Kreisher - Former Associate Administrator for Communications, Education and Media Relations, EPA
- Suzanne Mattei - Former New York City Executive of the Sierra Club and Author of Pollution and Deception at Ground Zero
- David Newman - New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health and Former Member, World Trade Center Technical Review Panel

"New Yorkers were depending on the federal government to provide them with accurate information about the air they were breathing. And they are still depending on the federal government to assess the level of ongoing risk," Senator Clinton said. "I hope this hearing will get to the bottom of what went wrong with the EPA's testing and clean-up plan in response to the post-9/11 environmental disaster, what lessons were learned, and what the EPA intends to do to protect New Yorkers going forward."

"Finally, we have an opportunity to hear, on the record and first hand, who in the federal government was really responsible for key decisions about the handling of post-9/11 air quality. And from there we can finally learn why those decisions were made -- decisions that are still having an impact on 9/11 victims today," said Nadler. "The lack of thorough Congressional oversight thus far has allowed for years finger-pointing and evading of responsibility on the part of the Federal government, but now is time for the truth. We must, at long last, get to the bottom of these matters, so we can do what is right for the heroes of 9/11, and ensure that we prevent anything like this from ever happening again." he added.

These hearings represent the first comprehensive Congressional oversight investigations into the federal government's handling of post-9/11 air quality since the immediate aftermath of the attacks. While in the Majority, Republican House

leadership steadfastly refused to hold a single House hearing on these matters, or even respond to a written request made in September 2003 by Nadler, then-Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, and then-Ranking Members John Conyers, John Dingell, George Miller, and Henry Waxman. (See http://www.house.gov/nadler/archive108/EPA_091703.htm).

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